



ECOS NEWS



ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse
Celebrating Our 43rd Year in Environmental Education

Vol. XLIV

Number 6

May 2016

ECOS Volunteers Needed

ECOS is looking for volunteers to help staff ECOS exhibits at the following events this spring. Volunteers will be handing out ECOS newsletters and event flyers.

Migration Festival	Sunday, May 1	11-3	Mabee Farm Historic Site
Lupine Fest	Saturday, May 14	11-5	Albany Pine Bush Preserve

Help Spread the Word About ECOS

If your club or organization has 10 minutes available for a brief description of ECOS and its myriad activities, please contact me. So far to gain greater recognition of ECOS, I've spoken to two Rotary groups which then expressed a keen interest in our publications and the ECOS newsletter. Please pass this offer on to others who may not be ECOS members.

Contact information: Arden R. Rauch
rauch@union.edu 372-2932 before 7 pm.

Save the Date

**ECOS Canoe & Kayak Outing
Schoharie Crossing
State Historic Site**

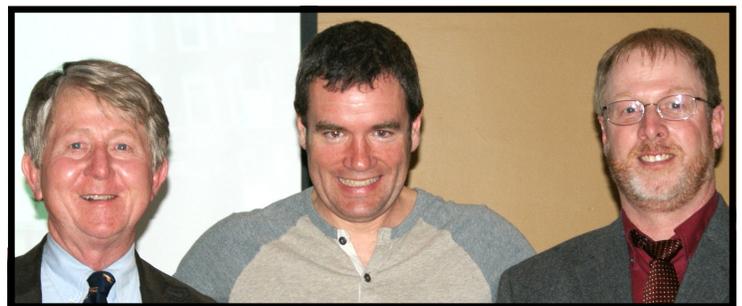
Saturday, June 4 10-Noon

See next issue ECOS news for details.

Swim with Swain

Christopher Swain provided an eye opening, entertaining and inspirational program about his swimming adventures in the Mohawk and Hudson Rivers at the ECOS annual dinner.

If you'd like to learn more about his environmental activities you can visit swimwithswain.org and sign up for his newsletter. He is also available to speak to schools, clubs and businesses about his adventures.



From left, ECOS Board President Will Seyse, Environmental educator and activist Christopher Swain, and ECOS Executive Director Patrick Clear at the ECOS Annual Dinner.

ECOS NEWS

published ten times annually by

ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse, Inc.

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ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse is a non-political, not-for-profit organization. Our mission is to provide environmental information and educational opportunities that enhance appreciation of the natural world, to build a community that is aware and knowledgeable about environmental issues, and to advocate informed action to preserve our natural resources. ECOS is funded through the support of our members and the community.

JOIN THE LOCAL FOOD REVOLUTION

We are building a new, full-time cooperative market featuring local, organic and sustainably produced natural foods in downtown Schenectady.



Electric City Food Cooperative
PO Box 1416, Schenectady, NY 12301

Contact: Kat Wolfram
(518) 322-6628
www.electriccityfood.coop

iGive.com

Shopping online this Holiday Season? If you are then you can support your favorite charity, AT NO EXTRA COST TO YOU, by visiting www.iGive.com. Over 800 of you favorite stores and catalogs participate in this program in which the retailer donates a portion of your purchase to your favorite charity. In addition, there are special discounts and sales available through iGive.com. ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse has raised over \$200 through this program so far.

eBay Giving Works

Did you receive a holiday gift you don't want or need? Sell it on eBay and support ECOS. eBay Giving Works is the dedicated program for charity listings where you can buy or sell items to support nonprofit organizations. eBay Giving Works is the dedicated program for charity listings on eBay, enabling you to list items on eBay and donate part or all of the final sale price to your favorite nonprofit organizations. Since 2000, more than \$81 million has been raised for charity from listings sold on eBay worldwide. To learn how the program works visit ebay.com and click on Giving Works. ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse is participating in this program.

RLE Photography & Media

E-mail: rle612@yahoo.com

Website: rle612.zenfolio.com

Richard L. Endres



Blenheim-Gilboa Power Project Visitors Center
1378 State Route 30 • North Blenheim, NY 12131
800-724-0309

Visitors Center Exhibits on energy and the environment.
Open daily 10 a.m.-5 p.m. except some holidays.
Lansing Manor Historic Estate open 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
May - October; closed Tuesdays.
Contact: samantha.vanness@nypa.gov



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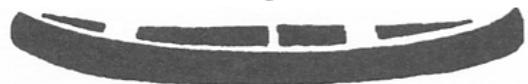


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President's Letter

Our annual dinner was a solid success this year with Christopher Swain as our guest speaker. He has been walking, slipping & sliding, and swimming the entire length of several rivers, as well as some lakes and sections of ocean shoreline to identify sources of pollution and record water samples. His talk highlighted his time in the Mohawk River, which was obviously of great local interest for us.

Water purity is of renewed concern with national and local stories of community based systems providing water with unsafe levels of contaminates. We can expect continued reports of water testing and concerns for public safety. New York is fortunate to have great supplies of water, and may benefit economically because of them. Quality of water is as important as quantity, and as we continue our mission of environmental education, we will keep teaching our youth to be aware of the need for pure water, and how to do basic water quality testing.

I'm looking forward to a beautiful spring and hope to see you at one of our planned events in the near future. Please remember to recommend an ECOS membership to anyone you know who has similar interests, and introduce them to our local guides to hiking and biking.

Will Seyse

En Plein Air - Art Outside with ECOS

http://painting.about.com/od/landscapes/a/plein_air_paint.htm
See insert for details.

Executive Director's Report

Coltsfoot, dandelions and mint are already blooming in my lawn so it must be time for the ECOS spring walks to begin. Our first spring walk will be Tuesday, April 26 at Limestone Rise and on May 3 we will visit a new location on our Spring schedule, the Iroquois Museum, for a guided tour of their new nature trail.

Wow, what a great presentation from Christopher Swain at the ECOS Annual Dinner. And thank you to everyone who came out for the dinner despite the severe storm that rolled through the area just an hour before the event.

Over the next 6 weeks ECOS is scheduled to lead nature walks and provide environmental programs for 14 different Capital District schools. We will also be participating in several community events including Niska Day, Lupine Fest, Migration Festival, Kid's Arts Fest and more. As a result of this busy schedule ECOS office hours will be limited and we will do our best to respond to emails and messages as quickly as possible.

In 2014 our Rachel Carson Celebration speaker was Niskayuna native Rachael Miller who told us about her Rozalia Project and the great efforts they were making in cleaning and protecting the Atlantic Ocean. After her program many of you were eager to volunteer, but unfortunately her project is run from Maine. Well now you have an opportunity to be part of the Rozalia Project as Rachel is bringing it to the Hudson River this summer. For details see the article in this issue.

And finally, a very nice kitchen knife was left behind at the snack table at the EOCS All Member meeting at the Niskayuna Library. If you'd like to claim it please give me a call.

Patrick Clear

ECOS Membership
ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse, Inc.
P.O. Box 9118, Niskayuna, NY 12309 (518) 370-4125

Please check your membership contribution level.

___ \$30. Individual ___ \$55. Donor/Organization ___ \$250. + Benefactor
___ \$40. Family ___ \$125. Sustainer \$___ Additional Donation

Please make your check payable to: ECOS

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___ As a GE employee (or retiree) my contribution is eligible for GE Foundation Matching Funds. I have registered with GE for the matching gift by computer at www.gefoundation.com. (If you do not have computer access, call customer service at 1-800-305-0669.)

___ My employer will match my contribution. I've enclosed my matching gift form.

___ I would like to be a volunteer. Please send me more information.

Friends of Kayaderosseras Spring Cleanup Day
Saturday, May 7 Kelley Park 9:30 am.

Dress grubby and bring work gloves if desired. Hot Lunch provided! Trash bags and lunch are provided, but bring your own work gloves. Volunteers are given directions to problem areas along the creek, where they bag the trash they can, and haul things like tires and appliances to the roadside where the Town Crews can collect them later. kayaderos.org

Landis Arboretum Spring Plant Sale
Saturday & Sunday, May 14 & 15 10:00 am. - 4:00 pm.

Out of the ordinary trees, shrubs, and perennials are the hallmark of this annual event. New this year: a limited variety of unique and mostly heirloom vegetable seedlings. Admission and parking are free. For information, call 518-875-6935 or email us at info@landisarboretum.org.

Friends of Woodlawn Preserve Spring Cleanup
Saturday, May 7 10 am. to 2 pm.

General cleanup, trail maintenance, nature walks, pizza - lots of reasons to come out and participate. Sign up at this website www.cityofscheneectady.com/475/I-Love-My-Parks.

Birding at Vale Cemetery/Park
Saturday May 7 7:30 am.

Ornithologist Neal Reilly will lead a free guided bird walk around Vale Park. Participants should meet at the caretaker's house, 907 State Street, Schenectady and bring their own binoculars. Experienced and beginner bird watchers are welcome. www.valecemetery.org

I Love My Park Day
Saturday, May 7

I Love My Park Day is an exciting statewide event, organized by Parks & Trails New York (PTNY) in partnership with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) and local Friends groups, to celebrate and enhance New York's parks and historic sites and bring visibility to the entire park system and its needs.

Nearly 100 state parks and historic sites will participate, from Jones Beach State Park to Niagara Falls State Park. New this year, to help celebrate the fifth anniversary of I Love My Park Day, we're excited to expand the event to public lands in the Adirondacks and Catskills managed by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), as well as several National Park Service (NPS) sites in celebration of NPS's centennial. Find an event near you at www.ptny.org

Niskayuna Tree Council Arbor Day Tree Planting
Friday, April 29 Noon

The Town of Niskayuna Tree Council will be planting a tree in River Road Park to celebrate the day. A limited number of saplings are available for you to take home and plant in your yard!

The Annual Kids' Arts Festival
Saturday, June 4 Jay Street Noon to 4:00!

Schenectady Recycles! Committee looks forward to the event and welcomes you to join in planning, assisting the children, and providing clean light-weight or medium-weight fabric. White sheets are needed for one of the two main projects. To sign up for a shift of 1-1/4 hr. or more, for further news, and to offer fabric pieces or scraps, please e-mail with Arts Fest as the subject: schenectadyrecycles@gmail.com.

This year's theme centers on inventions and other things: "Get smART". Of course it's *smart* to divert as much as we can from the landfill, and a current focus in our region is *recycling textiles*. Crowd-sourcing to create an artwork is an *inventive* project. We are planning such a project, calling it "*kidsourced*." The kids who add to a long banner will see the finished artwork as it is exhibited around the area.

Someone to organize a rotation schedule is needed, so families at the festival will see it posted at our table on June 4. Thanks for adding to the fun! Roberta Farrell, Chair of ECOS Schenectady Recycles! Committee

Rozalia Project Hudson River Expedition

Scientists, environmentalists, movie makers, engineers, communicators, change-makers, movers and shakers wanted...for a demanding, ocean trash removing, problem-solving, data-collecting, robot operating, action-taking, sailing, educating, inspiring, personally fulfilling and potentially career-advancing volunteer experience/internship. We are looking for energetic, enthusiastic people who are aligned with our mission and the expedition for which you are applying in a personal way.

Rozalia Project's Hudson River Expedition is a first of its kind research and education mission to go from the mountains to the sea, the headwaters to the continental shelf, sampling the Hudson River's whole water column, surface to sediment, looking at microfiber pollution. We will investigate type, concentration and distribution of microfibers as well as relationships to population and parallels with the presence of microplastic. We will also deliver engaging and inspiring education and awareness programs to communities along the entire Hudson River Watershed and collect information and imagery for presentations and programs for people everywhere.

Hudson River Expedition's goals: Complete the first-ever plastic microfiber study of the entire Hudson River from the headwaters at Lake Tear of the Clouds to the continental shelf off N.Y. Harbor; use those results to refine and deploy the solutions Rozalia Project is working on to prevent and address worldwide microfiber pollution; deliver engaging and inspirational education programs along the way – sharing results, experiences and actions people can take to be part of the solution; and generate substantial attention in traditional, digital and social media about the problem and what Rozalia Project and partners are doing to find and deploy solutions.

Dates: June 11 – July 8 <http://rozaliaproject.org>

Parent Teacher Student Association Hosts Free Electronics Recycling Tuesday, May 17

Bring your electronic waste to Fonda-Fultonville Central School (FFCS) on Tuesday, May 17 for the PTSA's free electronics recycling event in the high school parking lot from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. This event with Evolution Recycling is free, but proceeds from recycling these materials will help raise money for FFCS.

The following items will be accepted at no charge: Laptops, Cell phones, Laser printers, Routers, Network switches, Photocopiers, Power supplies, Wires/cables, Scanners, Vacuum cleaners, Radios, Servers, Electronic equipment, Projectors, VCR/DVD players, CRT monitors, TVs, Cable/satellite boxes, Speaker systems, Telecom equipment, Microwaves/toasters, Air conditioners, Dehumidifiers, Computer monitors. Evolution Recycling will shred or otherwise destroy all hard drives and other storage media. Items that will NOT be accepted at this time: Refrigerators or freezers, Fluorescent light bulbs.

Anyone with questions can contact Mike Bowman at (518) 774-4555 or mbowman.evolutionrecyclinginc@yahoo.com

Annual Lake George Hike-A-Thon Off to a Strong Start

Just three weeks since the Lake George Land Conservancy (LGLC) opened registration for its annual Hike-A-Thon, more than 200 people have signed up to join in the lake-wide event set for July 5. The LGLC anticipates a total participation of nearly 600 hikers, paddlers and volunteers.

The Lake George Hike-A-Thon is a one-day event held each July 5th, created to showcase the LGLC's parks and preserves around Lake George as free public resources, and to promote a healthy, active lifestyle and appreciation for the outdoors. Hikes take place simultaneously all around Lake George, culminating with aerial photography of each group by Carl Heilman II.

Free event t-shirts are offered to those who register by April 30; those shirts will also be available for purchase by those who register after that date. Those who choose to make a donation in support of the LGLC's stewardship activities may also receive a limited edition Hike-A-Thon baseball cap for each \$25 they give. Additional exclusive premiums are also available this year for donations of \$50 or more: Nalgene water bottle with Hike-A-Thon logo and ChicoBag sling bag printed with a Hike Lake George imprint.

The LGLC will also continue offering the chance to win a ride in the Hike-A-Thon helicopter as part of its spring appeal. The winner will be able to enjoy the Hike-A-Thon from a unique birds-eye perspective, in an exclusive ride in North Country Heliflite's helicopter piloted by Bruce Mowery. Fellow passengers include Carl Heilman and LGLC Finance and Office Manager Cornelia Wells. More details will be available in May.

For more information about the Hike-A-Thon visit lakegeorgehikeathon.org, or contact Communications and Outreach Manager Sarah Hoffman at 518-644-9673, or email shoff-

man@lglc.org. Fans may also follow the Hike-A-Thon on Facebook: facebook.com/LakeGeorgeHikeAThon.

Project WAVE Volunteers Needed

NYS DEC is recruiting participants for the 2016 summer sampling season to conduct water quality assessments in streams and rivers as part of the Water Assessments by Volunteer Evaluators (WAVE) project.

WAVE data are used to augment the work of the DEC Stream Biomonitoring Unit, which samples streams and rivers across the state to create an inventory of stream water quality. Citizen monitors will provide valuable information to assist in identifying healthy stream sites and flagging sites that potentially have water quality concerns. This data is included in federal and state water quality reports and helps to target professional assessments and local restoration or conservation efforts to where they are most needed.

Citizen monitors visit stream sites once per year, anytime between July and September, and collect macroinvertebrates - insects and other small organisms - from the rocks and rubble on the stream bottom. If six or more of the "Most Wanted" organisms are found, the stream segment is unimpaired and fully supports aquatic life. If mostly "Least Wanted" organisms are found, then the stream segment is flagged for possible investigation by professionals.

Citizen monitors can participate in the WAVE project in one of three ways. They can: (1) Serve as local coordinators who coach and coordinate their own team of WAVE participants. Local coordinators must attend a full day training to participate. (2) Sample independently. Independent samplers must also attend a full day training to participate. (3) Join a local team lead by a WAVE local coordinator. No training is required for this option.

The WAVE training sessions are rotated throughout the state's 17 major drainage basins on a five year schedule, targeting those basins that will be sampled by the DEC Stream Biomonitoring Unit in the following year (see the professional monitoring schedule: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/29576.html>). This year, WAVE training sessions are being offered in the Chemung River, Black River, and Lower Hudson River basins. 16 WAVE training sessions are open for registration. WAVE training sessions are scheduled for late April - early June at the following locations:

Friday, April 29	9am-4pm	Millbrook NY (Dutchess Co)
Monday, May 9	9am-4pm	Delmar NY (Albany Co)
Tuesday, May 10	9am-4pm	Raquette Lake NY (Hamilton Co)
Friday, May 13	9am-4pm	Montebello NY (Rockland Co)
Thursday, May 19	9am-4pm	Alfred NY (Allegany Co)
Friday, May 20	9am-4pm	Lowville NY (Lewis Co)
Friday, June 3	9am-4pm	Elmira NY (Chemung Co)

To register for a training session or for more information, contact the DEC WAVE Coordinator Alene Onion by email at wave@dec.ny.gov or wave@dec.ny.gov

Solarize Schenectady County

Who we are: Solarize Schenectady County is a group of local citizens furthering the use of renewable solar energy in the local area. We have been awarded a Grant to conduct outreach and education to residents of the county from NYSERDA (New York State Energy Research and Development Authority) who has awarded over 31 community campaigns for 2016, to conduct outreach and education to residents of the county.

As part of the solarize process we have competitively selected a Solar installer with, what we believe, is an optimal Solar proposal for Schenectady county residents. Please note: We do not profit from this, nor are we part of any private solar companies or local government. We are helping by providing both aggressive pricing and helpful selection information to assist homeowners.

What can you do: Contact us to schedule a presentation to your organization. You may also attend a scheduled presentation. The campaign will continue until October 15, 2016. You can put this announcement in your newsletter. We are also looking for volunteer Solar Ambassadors to help with campaign outreach. Check our website www.solarizeschenectadycounty.org for further details.

Kick Off Event - Sunday, May 1, Schenectady Greenmarket. Solarize will be located at the "Ask the Expert" booth during the market and we will make a formal announcement at noon from the music tent.

What we've done so far: With the assistance of NYSERDA technical staff, we have received and reviewed competitive bids from solar installer companies. We have met with key companies and selected Solar Liberty as the highest value supplier.

Is solar power practical here? Today's solar panels can supply most of your power needs even here in upstate New York. NYSERDA has found that a *"7 kW solar electric system located on a south-facing roof can typically offset 70-80% of a home's electricity needs"* (This is a typical size solar panel array). Note: Solar Liberty estimates that 70 to 80% of their installations are actually "net-zero".

Why is solar power helpful to our community/nation?

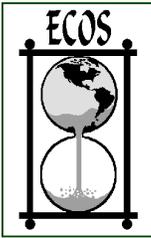
Environmental Carbon fuels are clearly a major cause of global warming. Environmentally, oil, gas, coal, and even nuclear are problematic; on the other hand, a spill of excess solar power is just a nice day. The production/manufacturing of solar cells has a much lower environmental "footprint" than continued use of non-renewable power plants.

National and Local economy Implementation of solar panels provide good local jobs. Like wind power, solar power can be ramped up quite quickly (versus nuclear power). Smaller, local power production is helpful to the national power grid.

Financial Federal and NY State tax incentives currently pay for about 50% of a system's cost. Outright purchase: With a 0% interest loan initially, a system with a 6 to 10 year payback can easily be bought outright. (This return on investment far surpasses any currently available stocks, bonds, or bank investment returns!). After the first year, a low interest loan can allow you to keep saving money. A lease system has a longer effective payback period than outright purchase, but still allows immediate electrical bill cash savings. Installation of solar panels increases a home's value. Note: no tax increases are allowed for 15 years --guaranteed by legislation. Solar allows a financial hedge against the possibility of future energy price increases. Financially, banks are giving up on coal plants. Private insurers won't touch nuclear power (Federal insurance guarantees are provided by us, the taxpayers!). With the rapid ramping up of wind and solar power, the need for frack gas powered plants will eventually be minimized. On the (sunny) horizon, battery storage (from cars and Tesla wall batteries) is starting to be introduced. Over 20GW of solar power is already online nationwide (capacity of about 10 nuclear power plants). <http://www.seia.org/research-resources/solar-industry-data>

How to Get Started: Go to <http://www.solarizeschenectadycounty.org/www.SolarizeSchenectadyCounty.org> Attend a community meeting in your town or any town that is convenient for you to learn more. Get a site assessment and a solar installation price quote from Solar Liberty. Sign a contract to have your new solar electric system installed; start producing clean electricity and save on your energy costs for years to come.

Sincerely,
Solarize Schenectady County
Contact: Peter Lion, solarizeschenectadycounty@gmail.com



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**ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse is located in the Niskayuna Community Center,
2682 Aqueduct Road, Niskayuna, NY.**

Promoting Bike Safety at Schenectady Greenmarket

May is National Bike Month! Time to clean the winter dust off your bike and get out there riding. With the warmer weather, we see many more cyclists on the road. From children in our neighborhoods to bike commuters, cycling activity is picking up for the year and this is the perfect time to get a refresher on bike safety and encourage safety for our youngest riders.

Thanks to a grant from the Capital Coexist program (www.capitalcoexist.org) you can expect to see members of the Schenectady County Environmental Advisory Council and Electric City Bike Rescue on-hand to provide valuable information about bicycle safety, handing out kid-oriented safety activity books and a limited number of children's bicycle helmets, reusable water bottles, and information on an upcoming Solarize-focused bike ride. Volunteers from the Bike Rescue will be on-hand fixing bicycles for donation, to talk with you about the Bike Rescue, and provide advice on how to maintain and fix your bike so that it is in top shape for riding this season.

If you have any questions, please contact Jeff Edwards at 386-2225.

May is Bike Month

For local bicycling events and projects check out these great Capital District sites:

Electric City Bicycle Rescue
www.electriccitybikerescue.org/
www.facebook.com/ElectricCityBikeRescue

Albany Bicycle Coalition
albanybicyclecoalition.com/albanybikerescue

Troy Bicycle Rescue
www.facebook.com/troybikerescue

Biketoga in Saratoga
bikeatoga.org